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SUBJECT: PUNJAB REACTIONS TO AHMADIYA DECISION

REF: ISLAMABAD 8610

BEGIN SUMMARY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECISION DECLARING AHMADIYAS NON-MUSLIM MINORITY HAS BEEN ALMOST UNIVERSALLY ACCLAIMED THROUGHOUT PUNJAB IN RASH OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS SINCE SEPTEMBER 7. MOST HAVE ALSO CALLED FOR TOLERANCE TOWARD AHMADIYAS AND RESPECT FOR THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS. AS EUPHORIA HAS WORN OFF, HOWEVER, ANTI-AHMADIYA SENTIMENT HAS REEMERGED TO RAISE NEW THEMES WHICH SUGGEST THAT DISPUTE HAS ONLY BEEN RESOLVED IN PRINCIPLE AND THAT DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTATION LIE AHEAD. END SUMMARY

1. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECISION SEPTEMBER 7 DECLARING AHMADIYAS NON-MUSLIM MINORITY ALMOST UNIVERSALLY ACCLAIMED IN PUNJAB WITH OBVIOUS EXCEPTION OF AHMADIYA COMMUNITY ITSELF AND FREE-THINKING INDIVIDUALS INDIFFERENT TOWARD RELIGION. LEADERS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MANY POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ISLAMIC GROUPS --

TOO NUMEROUS TO NAME-- RESPONDED PROMPTLY WITH PUBLIC STATEMENTS WIDELY PUBLICIZED IN PRESS WELCOMING DECISION; EDITORIAL COMMENT ALSO UNIFORMLY SUPPORTIVE. MOST, REFLECTING ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION AND PRIMIN BHUTTO'S STATEMENTS, EMPHASIZED SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION IN ENDING 90-YEAR DOCTRINAL DISPUTE AND CALLED FOR TOLERANCE TOWARD AHMADIYAS, RESPECT FOR THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, AND NON-VIOLENCE IN FUTURE RELATIONS. MANY ADVOCATED LIFTING OF "SOCIAL BOYCOTT" AGAINST AHMADIYAS AND TREATING THEM AS OTHER MINORITIES.

2. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF EUPHORIA, HOWEVER, NEW THEMES HAVE BEGUN EMERGE INDICATING THAT DISPUTE HAS ONLY BEEN RESOLVED IN PRINCIPLE AND FURTHER DIFFICULTIES, IF NOT CONFLICT, LIE AHEAD.

3. ISLAMIC ACTIVISTS, SPEARHEADED BY AD HOC ANTI-AHMADIYA MAJLIS-E-AMAL (ACTION COMMITTEE), HAVE BEGUN TO CALL FOR OFFICIAL ACTION -- BY ORDINANCE IF NOT LEGISLATION -- REGARDING AHMADIYAS ON SEVERAL FRONTS, INCLUDING: REMOVAL FROM KEY CIVIL AND MILITARY POSITIONS, DECLARING THEIR RABWAH (JHANG DISTRICT) HEADQUARTERS AN "OPEN CITY", BANNING THEIR PARA-MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS ("KHUDDAM-UL-AHMADIA- AND "FURQAN FORCE"), PROSCRIBING THEIR DISTRIBUTION OF SECTARIAN LITERATURE, AND CONTROLLING THEIR "AUQAF" RELIGIOUS TRUST PROPERTIES. SPOKESMEN ARE ALSO DEMANDING RELEASE OF ALL PERSONS JAILED OR DETAINED IN ANTI-AHMADIYA AGITATION. SIMILAR POINTS MIRRORED WIDELY IN EDITORIALS, ESPECIALLY IN VERNACULAR PRESS. LEADERS HAVE DECLARED MAJLIS WILL NOT BE DISSOLVED BUT WILL CONTINUE PRESS FOR "ISLAMIC ORDER" IN PAKISTAN.

4. POLITICALLY, SAME GROUPS PUBLICLY QUESTION RETENTION OF SEATS IN NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES BY AHMADIYAS ELECTED IN 1970. (IN RECENT CONVERSATION, SPEAKER RAFIQ SHEIKH TOLD US HE KNOW OF THREE, AND SUSPECTED MORE, AHMADIYAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN PUNJAB ASSEMBLY, AND TERMED AHMADIYAS "NOST HATED GROUP" IN PAKISTAN SOCIETY.) PUNJAB GOV QURESHI REPORTEDLY TOLD NEWSMEN AT MULTAN SEPTEMBER 11 THAT FUTURE STATUS OF AHMADIYA MPAS, MNAS, AND SENATORS WAS "BEING CONSIDERED ALONG WITH OTHER PROBLEMS" STEMMING FROM NA DECISION. MNA MAULANA MUFTI MAHMOOD REPORTEDLY ASSERTED THAT FUTURE AMENDMENT TO REGISTRATION AND ELECTROAL RULES WOULD

REQUIRE CITIZENS NOT ONLY TO DECLARE RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION BUT, IF MUSLIM, TO FILE AFFIDAVIT FULFILLING DEFINITION NOW INCORPORATED IN CONSTITUTION.

5. RE SERVICES, SOME PRESSURE GROUPS ARE ADVOCATING THAT AHMADIYAS BE RELEGATED TO OFFICIAL POSITIONS COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR PERCENTAGE IN POPULATION. ONE SUCH GROUP HAS CALLED FOR SEIZURE OF "RABWAH REGISTER" CONTAINING NAMES OF ALL AHMADIYAS IN PAKISTAN TO DETERMINE EXACT SIZE OF COMMUNITY.

6. AS FOR AHMADIYAS THEMSELVES, COMMUNITY IS UNDERSTANDABLY SHOWING INCREASING NERVOUSNESS ALTHOUGH APPARENTLY NOT THREATENED WITH PHYSICAL DANGER. SEVERAL PROMINENT LAHORI AHMADIYAS HAVE EXPRESSED TO US SERIOUS CONCERN OVER FUTURE PROSPECTS AND INDICATED INCLINATION TO EMIGRATE WITH WHATEVER RESOURCES THEY CAN TAKE AWAY. PERSISTENT REPORTS, CULMINATING IN DETAILED STORY IN URDU MASHRIQ TODAY, ASSERT THAT CENTRAL MAJLIS-E-SHURA (ADVISORY COUNCIL) OF AHMADIYA COMMUNITY CONVENING AT RABWAH SEPTEMBER 16 TO PLAN FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION. MEETING SAID

TO BE ATTENDED BY DISTRICT HEADS OF COMMUNITY IN

PAKISTAN, SECULAR LEADER SIR ZAFRULLAH KHAN AND HEADS OF AHMADIYA MISSIONS ABROAD. PRESS SPECULATES THAT COMMUNITY MAY DECIDE MOVE HEADQUARTERS TO ANOTHER COUNTRY, POSSIBLY NIGERIA. RABWAH LEADERS HAVE REPORTEDLY INVITED PARALLEL LAHORI AHMADIYA FACTION TO JOIN IN ADOPTING COMMON APPROACH. ANOTHER REPORT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATES THAT JI'S MAULANA MAUDOODI HAS ASKED INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION IN SAUDI ARABIA (RABITA-E-ALAM-E-ISLAMI) TO INFORM ALL MUSLIM STATES OF PAKISTAN'S DECISION RE AHMADIYAS AND URGE THEM TO FOLLOW SUIT.

7. ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS LED BY MAJLIS-E-AMAL HAVE DECLARED TODAY (SEPTEMBER 13) NATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING FOR NA DECISION TO BE OBSERVED IN MEETINGS AT MOSQUES AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES ADDRESSED BY POLITICO-RELIGIOUS LEADERS. ANOTHER SALVO IN CAMPAIGN OF DEMANDS FOR FOLLOW-ON GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST AHMADIYAS CAN BE EXPECTED.

8. MICROCOSMIC FOOTNOTE, BITTER AND IRONIC FOR

AHMADIYAS BUT ILLUSTRATIVE OF PREVALING ATMOSPHERE,
IS FACT THAT WHILE MUSLIM CELEBRANTS HAVE REPORTEDLY
BEEN DISTRIBUTING SWEETS AS MARK OF THANKSGIVING,
PUNJAB GOVERNMENT HAS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED SPECIAL RATION
OF SUGAR FOR UPCOMING RAMAZAN AND EID-UL-FITR
FESTIVITIES -- BUT FOR "MUSLIMS ONLY", EVIDENTLY
DISQUALIFYING AHMADIYAS.
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